



Celebrating National Farm to School Month? Taste Arizona and let us help you connect with local farms!

What is Taste Arizona Month?

October is National Farm to School Month. Schools around the state will serve meals from food grown on local farms or produced locally, and offer activities for students that celebrate the farms that feed us.

If you are planning a Taste Arizona event, please let us know! Whether you need help connecting to local farms or have already planned your event, we'd like to add you to our list of participating schools. Contact Ashley Schimke at Ashley.Schimke@azed.gov.

Who organizes it?

Taste Arizona Month was created in a partnership between the **School Nutrition Association of Arizona (SNAAZ)**, the **Arizona Department of Education (ADE)**, **Arizona Farm Bureau (AZFB)**, **University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Cooperative Extension (CALs-Extension)**, **Local First Arizona (LFA)**, **The Dairy Council of Arizona (DCA)**, and **Arizona Department of Agriculture (ADA)** to celebrate Arizona agriculture and promote nutrition education in our schools.

How can our school participate?

ADE can help match schools with farms and facilitate purchases directly from those farms or help schools find locally-sourced foods through your current distributor or direct market producers.

Taste Arizona: The Tempe School District

The Tempe School District (TSD) in Maricopa County has a long history of providing fresh produce and locally sourced foods in its cafeterias. The district launched a Farm to School Program in the 2008 school year to serve more fresh and healthy food to students, connect students with the origin of their food, and to support local farmers. To celebrate Arizona's fall harvest last year, TSD purchased Pink Lady and Sundowner apples from Briggs and Eggers Orchard in Willcox, AZ and served them at lunch time.

The school district also:

- Has a ADHS Certified school garden. Rover Elementary has produced garden side salads as a veggie option during lunch when available.
- Has utilized *Healthy Harvest for Arizona Schools* marketing materials for use in their lunch room.
- Has partnered with ADE on previous Regional Farm Tours for School Food Service Staff.

What should we serve during Taste Arizona Month?

SNAAZ has two suggested menus but encourage schools to try alternatives if you have farm or other local food partners who grow farm fresh items. For instance, you might decide to use peppers instead of carrots as a fresh Arizona grown veggie, replace a garden side salad with a broccoli salad dish, or make a bean or lentil chili as an entree. Don't forget about low fat dairy products from Arizona dairies!

SAMPLE MENU 1:

Bean and Cheese Burrito with salsa

Garden Side Salad with carrots, tomatoes, and cucumbers

Seasonal Arizona-Grown Vegetables and Fruits
(October offerings: apples, melons, various winter squash)

Low Fat or Fat Free White or Flavored Milk

SAMPLE MENU 2:

BBQ Chicken Salad with corn, cilantro, tomatoes and black beans

Whole Wheat Roll

Seasonal Arizona-Grown Vegetables and Fruits
(October offerings: apples, melons, various winter squash)

Low Fat or Fat Free White or Flavored Milk

→For recipe ideas, visit [USDA Foods Recipe Book](#) (vol 1), [Arizona Nutrition Network's Recipe Box](#), or [Farm to School Cookbooks](#)

There's more to Taste Arizona Month than eating!

We would love to help schools add educational activities to the day - posters in the cafeteria, inviting a farmer to lunch, visiting a farm, participating in [Ag Literacy Days](#) or networking with other school gardens near you. We want Arizona kids to Taste Arizona during the month of October and to consider the farmers who grow their food! We can help.

Taste Arizona: The Tucson Unified School District

The Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) in Pima County has assembled the TUSD School Garden Network to provide district-wide support to schools with new or existing school gardens. TUSD has a long standing partnership with the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, as a member of the TUSD School Garden Network, who has helped to maintain some of TUSD's school gardens and connect locally grown, indigenous fresh produce into meal programs used to enhance students' experiences in the garden. This fall the TUSD Ecology & Sustainability Program will be rolling out a newly created Tucson region school-calendar planting guide that helps teachers plant for success with adjacent gardening curriculum soon to follow.

The school district also:

- Has four ADHS Certified school gardens.
- Has served Arizona Grown fruits and veggies in their USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant Program, School Meal Programs and Community Kitchen for the past 3 years.

To learn which vegetables, fruits and herbs are available from local farms in any month of the year, visit these links:

- www.arizonagrown.org
- [Arizona Grown on Facebook](#)

You can calculate the quantity of produce you need to purchase based on serving size here:

- [Oklahoma Produce Calculator](#)
- [SCALE Inc. Local Food Cost Calculator](#)

Add flair to your event with cafeteria signage, educational lessons and activities:

- [Arizona Agriculture in the Classroom](#)
- [Healthy Harvest for Arizona Schools](#)
- [Arizona Agricultural Literacy](#)
- [Dairy Council of Arizona](#)

Find Direct Market Producers near you!

- Fillyourplate.org
- Goodfoodfinderaz.com